

Garrison's Charges

By PAUL SCOTT

DISTRICT ATTORNEY JIM Garrison's controversial New Orleans investigation of the Kennedy assassination is beginning to attract some belated Congressional attention.

Staffs of the House Committee on Un-American Activities and the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee are quietly checking into Garrison's wide-ranging inquiry to determine exactly what he is now up to.

At present, the attention of these Congressional probers centers around Garrison's interest in and handling of (1) an official of the Ku Klux Klan and (2) a former Congressional committee employee, who has given secret testimony before the New Orleans grand jury.

Significantly, both of these persons were reluctant witnesses in past Congressional investigations not related to the Kennedy assassination.

The KKK official involved in Garrison's investigation is Jack M. Helm, the former exalted cyclops of the New Orleans, Louisiana, unit of the United Klans of America. He is now head of an independent KKK group which he organized.

Summoned before the House Un-American Activities Committee in January 1968 during the committee's probe of the KKK, he was an uncooperative witness.

Helm, an operations manager of a New Orleans construction company, invoked the Fifth, First, Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments of the Constitution in refusing to answer any of the questions put to him by committee members.

The transcript of the committee hearings shows that one of the questions Helm refused to answer concerned his appearance on a speakers platform with three persons who were arrested in connection with the slaying in Philadelphia, Mississippi, of three civil rights workers.

Testimony was presented during the hearing by a committee investigator that "At the rally Helm stated, 'No Congressional investigation will ever deteriorate this (KKK) organization. We'll

still be here when they are dead and buried—and I hope it will be soon.'"

GARRISON BEGAN HIS PROBE of Helm on a tip from Jules Rocco Kimble, a self-avowed member of the KKK, who also claimed he once worked special assignments for the CIA. This the CIA denies and Garrison claims he will prove.

According to Garrison, one of David Ferrie, one of Garrison's suspects in the alleged Kennedy assassination plot, he drove Helm to Ferrie's apartment. Helm then came out with a satchel full of papers which, Kimble says, the KKK official then placed in a bank safe deposit box.

At this stage of his investigation Garrison refuses to say whether he has located the safe deposit box or recovered its mysterious contents.

However, aides of the district attorney are hinting that he has the key and that the box's contents will be revealed during next month's trial of Clay Shaw, the New Orleans businessman charged with being involved in a Kennedy assassination conspiracy.

Garrison is also probing an allegation of Kimble that Walter Sheridan, the former Justice Department trouble-shooter for then Attorney General Robert Kennedy, once counseled him not to talk to anyone and to go to Canada.

Another Congressional employee whose furnishing of information to Garrison has interested Congressional probers is Harold Weisberg, author of books on the Kennedy assassination attacking the Warren Commission, the FBI and CIA.

According to records of the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee and the House Un-American Activities Committee, Weisberg is the same man who testified in 1960 before a House committee that he bought forged documents in an attempt to link the Dies committee to the Silver Shirts.

At that time the Silver Shirts was a militant right-wing organization on the Attorney General's subversive list. The documents were used in an abortive attempt by a Michigan Congressman to smear the Dies committee, forerunner of the present House Committee on Un-American Activities.

THE RECORDS OF THE Senate Internal Security Subcommittee also show that Weisberg was dropped from the staff of the late Senator LaFollette's Special Investigating Subcommittee for allegedly leaking subcommittee confidential information.